

Contributed

"UNTIL HE FIND."—Luke 15:4.

By Anna Temple.

O tender shepherd! climbing rugged mountains
And wading waters deep,
How long wouldst thou be willing to go homeless
To find a straying sheep?

"I count no time," the shepherd gently answered,
"As thou dost count and bind
The days in weeks, the weeks in months; my counting
Is just—until I find."

"And that would be the limit of my journey.
I'd cross the waters deep,
And climb the hillsides with unflinching patience,
Until I found my sheep."
Bryn Mawr, Pa.

WHY I AM A PRESBYTERIAN.

By Rev. Henry W. Burwell.

To be a Presbyterian, with the emphasis on "be," places the individual in no mean position before the world. The hand that holds aloft that blue banner before a perishing humanity, if it is true to its sacred trust, is the hand that, in the wise providence of God, is capable of bringing more real blessedness to the world than any other hand, unless that other hand also raises the ensign of Presbyterianism. Such a statement as this could only be the product of inexcusable conceit unless it were the setting forth of a fact capable of demonstration to every right-thinking mind. To do this as briefly as possible is our present task. I am a Presbyterian:

Because Presbyterianism always places God where he belongs. Every breath of every true Presbyterian is but an acknowledgment of the infinite and eternal supremacy of God over all things. As was so truly and forcibly declared by Dr. Minton, Presbyterians do not believe so much in the sovereignty of God as they believe in a sovereign God. A triune Spirit, infinite, eternal and immutable; a personal working power, not a simple force, who is the Creator, Governor, Preserver of all things he has made; a Being who is omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent, who sees, hears, understands all things, and directs all things for the accomplishment of his own eternal purpose. From the beginning to the end God is, the past, present and future, blazing in the light of his infinite mind an everlasting now. He is not the God of the Deist, nor of the Pantheist, but one in whose heart's eternal affections every creature that he has made finds a part as well as a place. To him we raise our voices in psalms of praise, to him we direct our petitions when we bow in the sacred sanctuary of supplication and at his feet we lay the sacrifice of our devoted service, trusting in the merit of the Divine teacher who has taught us to call him Father. Whatever he may be to others, to the true Presbyterian he can only be "God over all things, blessed forever."

Because Presbyterians always place the Scriptures where they belong. The message of Presbyterianism to the world is that this infinite God has seen fit to bow down to this sin-cursed earth and, in the incon-

ceivable sweep of his condescension and mercy, has uncovered before a dying humanity the glory of his grace and the wonders of his love. This revelation is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, and is the only rule to direct mankind in his search for the truth, the fulfilment of his highest destiny, to glorify God, the development of the purest and noblest character for the life that now is and the inspiration for the most glorious hope, pointing to the life that is to come. With this sacred volume in its hand, Presbyterianism stands before the world and declares it to be her one and only infallible rule of faith and practice and that whatsoever is not commanded here, either by its plain declaration, or by good and necessary inference therefrom, is forbidden and hurtful both for the individual and the Church. Where the Word is silent, the Presbyterian Church has never dared to speak, but where the Word has spoken, the Presbyterian Church dares not keep silent. Her gospel is nothing more nor less than the whole counsel of God, and to the world she has declared it, whether men will hear or forbear. Woe betide the day when our beloved Church shall depart from this, her historic position as to the Word of God, for in that day will her crown jewel be lost and her glory depart.

Because Presbyterianism always places the Church where it belongs. It has often been claimed and proclaimed that the Church was and is the custodian of the truth of God in this world. The answer of Presbyterianism is an emphatic denial. No mere man or company of men has ever been found in this world that is either good enough or strong enough to keep the Word of God, and to none of his creatures, either individually or collectively, has God ever committed such a trust. The Church has never been infallible in this world, nor will it ever be so. The keeping and proclamation of the message of the Word is not in the hands of the Church, but with the Holy Spirit, who works in and through the church as the divinely appointed witness before men to the truth which he has inspired. The Church can only declare the message as she receives it and can only march according to the orders of her divine King and Head. To heaven she has always directed one question and that, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" To the cry that man must have an infallible interpreter of an infallible Word, there is but one answer: "God is his own interpreter and he will make it plain." Just as emphatically as upon the day of Pentecost, although by different means and in different forms, does the Spirit speak today, and there is no power in the Church for the accomplishment of her mission to men save as she receives it from this abiding, divine source. And yet, though all of this be true, the Church is worthy of all honor as the Bride of the Lamb, the earthly fold of the followers of Christ, the mouthpiece of the Holy Spirit, the type of the soul's eternal inheritance, the visible body of Christ her Head. To prove worthy of her high and sacred trust, to stand ever as a witness to the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ for the salvation of men, to hold up the Cross as the one and only hope of a dying humanity and concentrate all in the one cry, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved," this is